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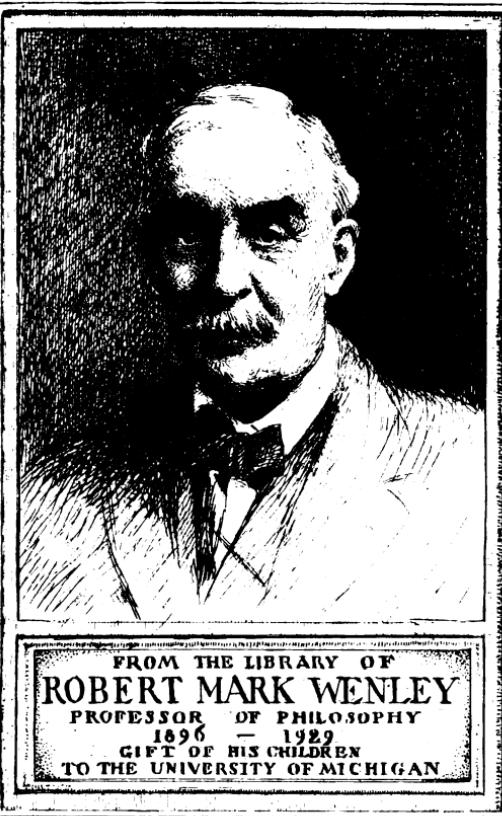
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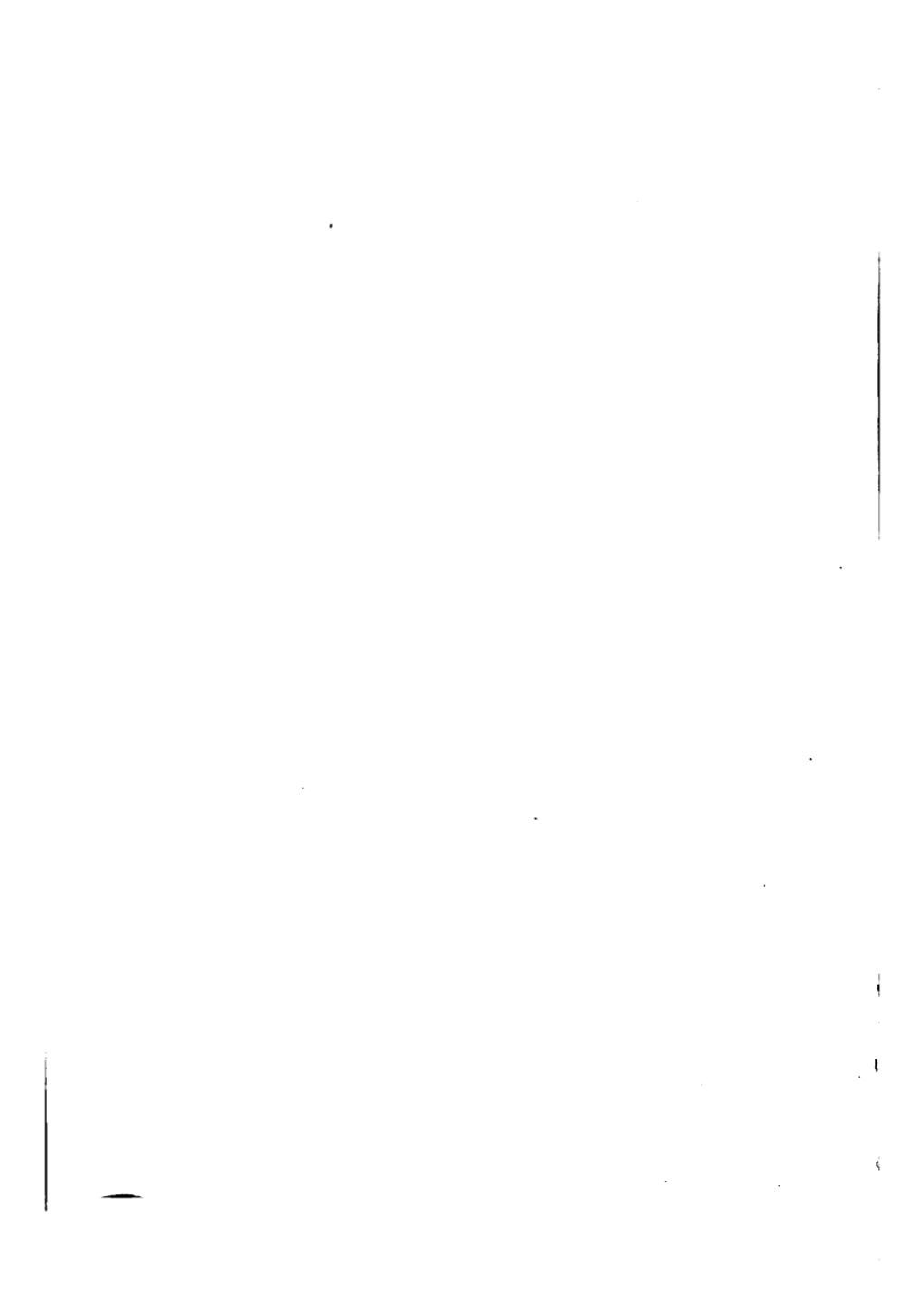
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**THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PAUL.**



# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PAUL.

An Essay on the Germs of the Doctrine  
of Atonement.

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## PREFACE.

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THIS Essay, if Pauline in nothing else, is Pauline in one particular—it is born out of due time. Written more than a decade ago, and read before a body of learned men, the Taylerian Society of London, founded to perpetuate the memory and to carry on the work of the late John James Tayler, predecessor of Dr. James Martineau in the Principalship of Manchester New College, it converted none of the audience to the author's views, but it evoked, especially on the part of Dr. Martineau, then president of the society, the expression of a wish that it might see the light. The ways and means thereto were not at the time forthcoming. Since then the MS. has lain in dust, and might finally have been consigned to ashes, had it not been for the helping hand of the present publisher.

During this period of gestation its vicissitudes have been various. It has been offered to the editors of sundry reviews. One thought it was too long; another said it was

too learned. For one it had “too much Greek,” for another “too little interest.” And one, whose fame I would fain immortalize, though his name I have long forgotten, having seen a printed abstract of the Essay, returned the imitable answer, “If the article is anything like as good as the specimen you send, it will not do for our review.”

On the whole, I regret not the delay. It has confirmed my confidence in the general correctness of the views set forth in the following pages; for while most of what I have written on theological subjects—and that most, I need hardly say, means sermons—I could not conscientiously publish without considerable modification, this Essay alone has rather gained than lost by re-perusal in its power to fortify the writer in his conviction of the soundness of the position which it takes up. Whether this be due to a singular infatuation of my own, or to the intrinsic strength of the position in question, I must leave the reader to judge.

In so far as the recovery of an ancient meaning can be called original and novel, I claim at all events novelty and originality for my treatise.



## CHAPTER I.

### *PAUL'S VIEW OF THE LAW.*

THE following remarks are intended to supplement in some degree the great work of Baur on the subject, as well as his posthumous treatise on "The Theology of the New Testament."

His masterly treatment of the *historical development* of the doctrine, from Paul to Hegel, will probably remain for ever unsurpassed ; but the attentive reader of the writings of the great Tübingen divine can hardly fail to be sensible, that with regard to the *origin* of the idea that in the death of Jesus some kind of expiatory offering was involved, there yet remains a certain vagueness in our conceptions, which it would be advantageous to clear up.

It will be remembered that the earliest

patristic theology, however it varied in detail, concurred in representing the death of the Redeemer as in some sort a price paid to the Devil, the effect of which was that the latter lost a right, which he previously possessed, of disposing of the souls of men.

What we miss in Baur is an attempt to connect this theory with the Pauline theology, almost immediately preceding it in order of time, and as I think very nearly related to it in order of thought.

Partly as a cause and partly as a consequence of the lack of a distinct logical connexion between the view of Paul and that of the early Church Fathers, the Pauline doctrine itself appears, under Baur's handling, so vague and undefined, as to present a striking contrast to the dialectic thoroughness elsewhere exhibited by the Apostle, while it is hardly reconcilable, as we shall see, with some of his most emphatic utterances on this very subject.

The connecting link, as I believe, between the patristic and the Pauline view of the Atonement, is to be found in the Gnostic system, and more especially in that of Marcion, whom it would perhaps be more correct to call a con-

sistent, than (as is generally done) a one-sided follower of Paul.

With Marcion, the God of the Old Testament, the God of the Jews, is neither more nor less than the author of all evil ; in other words, he is no longer distinguishable from the Devil. It was this God who, according to him, caused the death of Christ, and that in virtue of His attribute of righteousness, which righteousness (the righteousness of the law), is with Marcion but another name for cruelty and injustice. It is true that Marcion built no theory of an actual atonement upon this view of the death of Christ ; indeed, he was almost precluded from doing so, by the general air of unreality in which his Docetic doctrine involved the whole transaction ; but for our inquiry it is important to observe that we have here a very definite and unmistakable theory as to the significance, the moral significance at all events, of the death of Christ. He died, according to Marcion, as the victim of an unjust law sanctioned by the Jewish God. In other words, the Devil, or a deity not distinguishable from him, was the author of the law by which Christ perished.

This view presents striking points both of

affinity and contrast to the patristic theory on the one hand, and the Pauline view on the other. The early Fathers agree with Marcion, in representing the Devil as the author of the Saviour's death ; but in accordance with the consciousness of the growing Catholic Church, that great peace-maker between Judaic and heathen Christianity, refused to identify the Devil with the Author of the Jewish law, or to regard the death of Jesus as the legitimate or normal application of the same.

The Apostle Paul, whom Marcion claimed as his teacher, was too good a Jew to identify the God of the Old Testament with the Devil, but did he not perhaps at the same time regard the death of Christ as the natural consequence of the law of Moses ? Had not the law in his mind, a certain character of hardness, amounting to injustice, which made it impossible for him to conceive it as given by God ? From his whole attitude towards the law, we cannot but feel that had not the Apostle been too firmly bound by reverence for the Scriptures, he would only too gladly have cast the responsibility of the Mosaic legislation on any one rather than "God and the Father of our

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Lord Jesus Christ." And yet he was met in the Scriptures by the incontestable fact, that the God of Abraham and of Mount Sinai appear there as one. The only way out of the difficulty would be to derive the law *indirectly* from God, through the interposition of some inferior being or beings, on whom must fall the blame of any harshness and iniquity that might attach to it. The above considerations would lead us to anticipate that Paul would, in the first place, regard the death of Christ as the sacrifice of an innocent victim to an unjust law ; and in the second place, that he would try to exonerate the God of his fathers from all complicity in the death of the Righteous, by assuming as wide an interval as possible between the law itself, and God as its ultimate author. Let us see how far these anticipations are borne out by the facts of the case.

Before proceeding however with our investigation, we should, in order to understand St. Paul aright, banish from our minds, as far as may be, all that has been said and written on the subject since his time ; all the speculations of Grotius and of Anselm, all the darkness of scholastic jargon, all the crosslights of modern

as of medieval thought, all the trite terminology of tracts, all the familiar phrasing of evangelical discourse. On the other hand, we must try and realize, from the standpoint of modern critical research, the actual historical significance of the death of Christ, its immediate bearing on the circumstances of the times in which it took place, as well as its wider influence on the destinies of mankind. For every speculative doctrine there must be a groundwork of fact, at least if historical events are any way concerned therein: theories are not caught floating in the air; and the maxim *ex nihilo nil fit* is true of other things besides the creation of the world.

Even a casual reader of Paul's writings can hardly fail to observe that the Apostle connects in the closest manner the Redemption of Christ with deliverance from the law. The faith of Christ and the works of the law are everywhere opposed to each other. Accordingly we naturally look for the most definite statement of Paul's view of that Redemption to the Epistle in which the contrast between the law and the gospel is most strongly marked, I mean the Epistle to the Galatians. Such an explicit de-

claration we find in chapter iii. 13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us : for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." What is the meaning of these words ? Popular theology, building on the theory of Anselm, has a ready answer, according to which the words are interpreted as follows, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of God, having borne the curse in our stead, when He was crucified on Golgotha." But is this Paul's meaning ? Paul nowhere asserts or implies that Christ was accursed of God. Time was no doubt when, as a Jew, he thought so ; but could he think so as a Christian ? It may be replied, that Christians think so now. Yes, indeed, but not without a shudder even now ! and how many ages of ingenious speculation, of gradual intermingling of Jewish and Christian prepossessions, of laboured hypotheses and fantastic theories, have passed before it became possible for them to think so. Of all the intricate reasoning by which the Church has tried in successive stages of her doctrinal development to reconcile the theory of expiation with the justice of God, and the cha-

racter of Christ, Paul, so far as we can judge from his writings, knew absolutely nothing. When we think of his passionate devotion to Christ, his profound veneration for His memory, the all but adoration (to say the least) which he paid to His person, can we conceive of him, not only as saying, but what is of far more moment, as being the *first* to say, and that without one word of explanation, "Christ was accursed of God!" Surely the very thought would have at once dragged after it his well worn formula of deprecation, *Mὴ γένοιτο!* "God forbid!" Some colour is lent to the popular view of the text by the Authorized Version's rendering of *γενόμενος* "being made," as though Christ was not really deserving of the curse of the law, but for God's purpose was held to be so. This last prop of the prevailing interpretation falls away when we read *γενόμενος*, literally "by becoming." It is no legal fiction, no forensic expedient which is spoken of; it is a plain and simple historical fact. Christ did incur the curse of the law; and as a proof of the fact, Paul quotes Deut. xxi. 23, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."<sup>1</sup> That

<sup>1</sup> Note Paul's omission of the words "by God."

is, the Apostle, for the sake of his argument, regards the Roman punishment of crucifixion in the case of Christ, inasmuch as it was inflicted at Jewish instigation, as for the nonce essentially the same as the *Mosaic* penalty of hanging on a tree in Deuteronomy. He identifies, somewhat violently it must be owned, the *σταυρός*, *i.e.* the *crux* of the Romans, with the *ξύλον*, *Ψ* of the Mosaic code. This view was of the utmost significance for the Pauline mode of thought. Hence it happens that it became a kind of cant term of the Pauline school, and in the Acts of the Apostles, as well as in the first Epistle of Peter, writings which have studiously preserved the phrases and as studiously emasculated the meaning of Paul, *ξύλον*, no longer *σταυρός*, is regularly, nay uniformly used to denote the cross.

Now the view that Christ died as the accursed of the law would be just as natural to Paul as the view that He was accursed of God would be horrible and intolerable. For as a matter of fact, as we have said already, Christ did incur the curse of the law. The recognised expounders and guardians of the law were the objects of His constant attacks,

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and He Himself was the object of their inveterate animosity. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets," has a truth of irony about it which far outweighs the truth of its literal significance. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, but I say unto you,"—quite the reverse—is the keynote of the life and teaching of Jesus. No man could treat the Sabbath as Christ treated it without incurring the curse of Moses, no man could be the friend of publicans and sinners, no man could suffer the touch of a Magdalene, no man could even preach free forgiveness to repentant sinners, no man could lay such stress on motives and hold external acts, especially ceremonial acts, so light as Jesus did, without contravening not only the letter but also the very spirit of the law, at least as it was popularly accepted and enforced at the time when He taught. How far the milder and humaner and more equitable elements which here and there appear are to be regarded as the true spirit, the essential part of the Mosaic system, is a question which need not here detain us. To all intents and purposes Jesus was a most uncompromising opponent of the law of Moses as

generally understood and received in His time; beneath the sentence of that law He fell; in payment of the penalty laid down for the transgression of that law He perished. "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." That was the form of His accusation according to the fourth Evangelist; and whether or not these exact words were used, such was undoubtedly the plea on which He was condemned. By making Himself the Son of God, just because He was the Son of man, by claiming in the name of Humanity to forgive the sins of the penitent, and wholly to excuse their merely legal transgressions, He set Himself up as "a greater than Moses," and fell beneath the denunciation of those that sat in Moses' seat. When, therefore, Paul asserts that Christ "became a curse," he is not enunciating a fantastic theory, but simply stating a fact—a fact which was patent to every one, believers and unbelievers alike. That Jesus died under the curse of the law was notorious. The only persons who ignored it were those half-hearted, Judaizing Christians who thought to serve two masters, and against them this Epistle is speci-

ally levelled. The whole men on either side—the Jews on the one, Paul and his followers on the other—had no doubt in their minds on the subject. The only question between them was, what was the *authority* of this law of Moses under which Jesus was condemned? Was the law of Moses also the law of God? The Judaizing Christian must of necessity maintain the affirmative, and would naturally try to fix the responsibility of Christ's death on the mal-administration of the law by the Sadducees and scribes. Not so Paul. He does not stop, least of all *in this* Epistle, to inquire whether the law had been misinterpreted, but boldly attacks its origin, and seeks to invalidate its authority.

In the first place he says it was a late invention. The *promise* given to Abraham, as an anticipation of the Gospel, was not to be set aside by the law, which was given four hundred and thirty years later. Now this promise he twice emphatically asserts (Gal. iii. 17, 18) was made to Abraham by God. The promise then was divine; that is a great point with him. But what about the law? The marked emphasis of the expressions *προκεκυρωμένην ὑπὸ ποῦ Θεοῦ . . .* ratified before by

God, τῷ δὲ Ἀβραὰμ δι' ἐπαγγελίας κεχάρισται ὁ Θεός, “for to Abraham by the promise a free gift has been made [of the covenant] by God,” already asserts by implication that the law had a different origin.

But, secondly, the law was evil in its design; to cause transgressions was it added. Τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη. It was a tempter, the strength of sin, as he elsewhere calls it. All this prepares us for the statement which follows in vv. 19, 20, that the law was inferior in origin to the promise and its second edition in the Gospel: διαταγεῖς δι' ἀγγέλων, ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου. Ὁ δὲ μεσίτης ἐνὸς οὐκ ἔστιν, ὁ δὲ Θεὸς εἰς ἔστιν, i.e. “ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator (namely, of course, Moses), and he is a mediator not of one, whereas God is one.” Commentators have found hopeless obscurity in this verse. To me the meaning seems plain and straightforward enough as follows: “ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator,” i.e. a *medium*, or *communicator*, as Jesus is called in Hebrews the Mediator, or Representative, of a better covenant; *now he* (ὁ δέ) is the representative not of one like God [*but* (understood) of many, i.e. the angels]; the

obvious conclusion being that Moses being a representative of a plurality of inferior beings or "angels," not necessarily even good angels, by whom the law was ordained, could not claim to be the representative of the one and only God! The divine, at least the directly divine, origin of the law between whom and God if in any sense he was its ultimate source, first the angels, and then Moses, are emphatically interposed, is here denied in plain words, and what follows is in close connection with this view. 'Ο οὖν νόμος κατὰ τῶν ἐπαγγελιῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ μὴ γένοιτο! "Let then the law as against the promises of God be nowhere!" Thus I venture to render, reading through the Authorized Version's stops and interrogation. The common translation which runs, "Is then the law against the promises of God? God forbid!" is incompatible with a context wholly taken up not in reconciling, but in pointing a contrast. If, however, the grammar of the received rendering be preferred in deference to the Pauline usage of *μὴ γένοιτο*, as an independent ejaculation, I would still translate, "Shall then the law be set against the promises of God? Far be it!"

The question now arises, what was the character of these *ἄγγελοι*, or inferior spirits, from whom the Apostle derives the law? The succeeding verses furnish the answer. There are, however, a few points which will detain us by the way—of secondary importance perhaps, but still of moment so far as they place in a clearer light the Pauline view of the nature of the law. In ver. 21 the Authorized Version stands as follows: “For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.”

The exact force of the original is perhaps better rendered: righteousness would actually have resulted from the law: *ὅντως δν ἐκ νόμου ἦν ἡ δικαιοσύνη*. Whereas he continues, the writing, *ἡ γραφὴ*, *i.e.* of the law,—not Scripture generally, for no Scripture quotation follows,—hath shut up all under sin. The point of the Apostle's argument is not to show, as our received translation seems to imply, how desirable it would have been, had it been possible, but rather from the experience of facts, how impossible it was, for righteousness to result from the law. His aversion to the law, in this Epistle at any rate, is much more unqualified

than is generally supposed. So again *ὁ νόμος παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν γέγονεν* is not “*was*” our schoolmaster, as the A. V. has it, but “*became*,” or rather “*has become*,” our schoolmaster, as it were, in spite of itself. It was not the *intention*, but only the *effect* of the law to lead men to Christ. The intention was to bad, to tempt, *παραβάσεων χάριν*. We are now prepared to find Paul ascribing the origin of the law to malignant powers. It will not surprise us if the *ἄγγελοι*, by whom it was ordained, were bad angels in his view. Accordingly, in iv. 3 we find them not obscurely identified with the “*genii*,” which our Version most inadequately renders “*elements*,” or “*rudiments*,” of the world, under whom men were enslaved. That *στοιχεῖον* means *genii*, and not *elements*, is sufficiently established by its patristic use, as Baur and Hilgenfeld think. But the fact that in modern Greek *στοιχεῖον* means a “*genie*,” or a *ghost*, is a striking confirmation of this view.\* These *στοιχεῖα*

\* See for a fuller discussion of this question, Appendix I. of my little work on the “*Modern Greek Language in its Relation to Ancient Greek*,” Clarendon Press Series, 1870; also for still further corroboration a Paper on the “*Antiquities*

are identified in *v.* 8 with the gods which by nature were none, *τοῖς μὴ φύσει οὐσι τεοῖς*, whom the Galatians as heathens had worshipped before their conversion. Their lapse into Judaistic practices is characterized as a relapse to the weak and beggarly genii ; *πῶς ἐπιστρέφετε πάλιν ἐπὶ τὰ ἀσθενῆ καὶ πτωχὰ στοιχεῖα, οἷς πάλιν ἄνωθεν δουλεύειν θέλετε*. As then *στοιχεῖα* were especially the genii of the zodiac, the “bears and lions” of the sky, so Paul regarded the custom of observing days and months and times (or seasons), *καιροὺς* and years common to Jewish and heathen ceremonial, as a kind of devil-worship. Compare here Colossians ii. 8–18, Pauline if not by Paul. “See that no man make a spoil of you by would-be wisdom and vain deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the genii of the world, and not according to Christ. Let no man judge you in meat or in drink in respect of a festival, whether of the new moon, or of sabbaths, which are a shadow of those things which were to come” (observe here already the Catholic tendency to soften down the old Pauline anti-of Modern Greek,” read before the Lit. and Phil. Soc. of Liverpool, page 305 of the “Transactions for 1873–4.”

thesis between law and gospel), "while the substance is of Christ. Let no man deprive you of your due at his will by an abject-minded worship of angels, prying into that which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by the mind of his flesh." Here, again, the *στοιχεῖα* and the *ἄγγελοι* are different names, one might say the Greek and Hebrew idioms respectively for the same personalities. Hence it follows that Christ's redemptive work was a triumph over the powers of darkness and of nature, and the preaching of the Gospel was conceived of as a continual warfare with the same. "By wiping out the handwriting of the ordinances that was against us, and taking it out of the midst, nailing it to the cross, Christ spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in His person" (Col. ii. 14, 15). The object of His death was "to make known to the principalities and powers in heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. iii. 10). "He has saved us from the power of darkness" (Col. i. 13). "Our conflict is not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, with the world-rulers of the darkness of the present age, with the

spirits of wickedness in heavenly places" (Eph. vi. 12). If one of these "angels from heaven," the special patrons of the Mosaic law, and hence by implication of Judaic Christianity also, were to "preach another gospel, let him be accursed" (Gal. i. 8). "Know ye not that ye shall judge angels?" says Paul in another place (1 Cor. vi. 3). Who can these angels be but those who had crucified Jesus? The same angels seem to be referred to in Romans viii. 38. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God." Again, "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Phil. ii. 10). "The ruler of the powers of the air," the presiding evil genius, "is the spirit who now works in the children of disobedience" (Eph. ii. 2).

## CHAPTER II.

### *PAUL'S NOTION OF REDEMPTION.*

I THINK I have now made it clear that Paul regarded the law as the work of evil spirits, and that, therefore, when he says Christ incurred the curse of the law, so far from meaning that He incurred the curse of God he means the very reverse. It avails nothing against this view so plainly set forth in the Pauline Epistles to quote Romans vii. 12—"The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good,"—because the contrary is elsewhere so distinctly stated that if this statement is made to refer to the Mosaic law in its entirety, then only one inference is possible, *viz.* that Paul must have changed his mind. And that he had materially modified his view when he wrote to the Romans there can be little doubt. Instead of a fiercely polemical we have an argumentatively conciliatory tone. He sees the logical issue of his former statements, and

shrinks from pressing them further. With the exception of the reminiscence already quoted, he says nothing about the angels, or genii, as authors of the law. He speaks to the Romans of a law of God, and yet, be it observed, he does not identify this law of God with the law of Moses, but rather with the law of the Spirit of life, the law of his mind,—in other words, the law of reason and conscience ; whereas the law from which Christ made him free (viii. 2),—which, according to Galatians, was the law of Moses,—he characterizes as the law of sin and of death. We know, he says, that the law is spiritual (vii. 14), yet that cannot have been the Mosaic law of rites and ceremonies, but only the moral law. The conciliatory tendency of this letter leads the writer to admit of the application of the *word* law to something which *was* holy, and just, and good ; but nevertheless the law as it came from Moses, or rather from the angels through Moses, a mere catalogue of injunctions and prohibitions, is still, as in 1 Cor. xv. 56, the strength of sin. The “sinful affections which are by the law” are still its result (Rom. vii. 5). Thus the law is used ambiguously in the Epistle to the Romans. There

is a law to which Christians are dead in Christ : ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ· κατηργήθημεν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου, ἀποθανόντες ἐν ᾧ κατειχόμεθα· ὅστε δούλευειν ἡμᾶς ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος, καὶ οὐ παλαιότητι γράμματος (Rom. vii. 4, 6). This causes great confusion and obscurity throughout this Epistle, but that should not lead us astray with regard to the others, where the law is used in one sense, and in one sense only, and that a bad one. In Galatians, Colossians, Ephesians, Corinthians, and Philippians the law means the Mosaic code of rites and ceremonies, the observance of which is a kind of Devil-worship, and the refusal to conform to which brought Jesus to the Cross.

This part of my subject, then, I may consider as made out, *viz.* that Christ incurred the curse of the law, and that law, according to Paul's view, had anything but a Divine origin. It now remains to inquire how, according to him, that fact constitutes man's redemption. Paul says (Gal. iii. 13), "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us." How was this? The answer is most clearly given in 2 Cor. v. 21 : τὸν γὰρ μὴ γνόντα ἀμαρτίαν, ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς

*γινώμεθα δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ.* It was, then, the righteousness of Christ, His sinless, unmerited sufferings, which made Him the Redeemer. There is a truth of Nature in this Pauline view of Christ's death, which I will try to make plain by an illustration comparing small things with great. Let us think of some great teacher like Schleiermacher, Theodore Parker, or Socrates, condemned in his life by the law of public opinion, whose curses are freely hurled against all who assail its authority. Such a man is condemned by the curse of that law, and we believe him in our coward hearts perhaps accursed of God as well. He lives and dies beneath that curse ; and though something of his goodness has come home to us, yet still we tremble at the denunciation of priests and zealots, and meanly stand by and keep the clothes of them who throw the stones of their malice at his followers. For we too are under the curse of the law ! We shrink from inquiry ; we stifle the voice of our conscience ; we join in the cry of the rabble, " Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live !" yet all the while there lurks within us a feeling of mysterious sympathy with the man whose

name is made a by-word of reproach. It is hard for us to kick against the pricks. We too begin to feel the burden of the law as one that is grievous to be borne. We know we are not really fulfilling that kind of righteousness which tradition and custom demand of us. Real sins which our consciences condemn, and offences against conventional propriety, are mingled together in our inner man. We lack an ideal of morality. We are in bondage to men's opinions. But at last the example of the great Man that lived a life of purity, and that died a death of peace, takes hold upon our soul. We cannot shake it off. We were told that he was wicked, but, lo ! we find him good. We were told he was an infidel, and, lo ! he was a giant in faith. We were told that he died despairing, but we read, and, behold ! it is a lie. His holy confidence begets the like in us. We cast in our lot with him, content if we may live, daring to die as he did. Thus he redeems us from the curse of popular execration. *Vox populi, vox Dei*, is no more our creed. We are self-identified with the object of our admiration. We are in him, one with him, by sympathy of soul. And, lo ! there is

a new creation. Old things are passed away, all things have become new! Words have lost their conventional narrowness and acquired a newer and a truer meaning. Inquiry is a duty, not a sin! Conscience is not the whisperings of the tempter, but the voice of God. Reason is not His enemy, but His gift. Spiritual pride, human depravity, the word of God, have a widely different meaning now to what they had of yore. Old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new! And all this change is wrought of God, for it was He who reconciled us to Himself, to that nobler and higher ideal which the great departed has taught us. God, not the Devil, was in that Man, reconciling the world unto Himself, refusing to impute as trespasses those deviations from the trodden track, which those who knew Him not charged as sins upon His faithful followers; and it was God Himself, because He was in that Man, that made him what the world calls a sinner, whereas he knew no sin in those things wherein they accused him, that we might become, by fellowship with him, the very righteousness of God—righteous, that is, by a standard not human but Divine. His sin

in the view of the world is our righteousness in the eye of God. By the power of saintly example in those whom the multitude condemn, we are delivered in a manner from the curse of that multitude's law. And what is true of all such was pre-eminently true of Christ. Here again we are brought face to face with a fact, not a mere speculation. Paul laid the ground-work of Christian theology, not by hunting theories in the air, but by idealizing the actualities of earth. It is a confirmation of our view to observe how closely Paul connects man's justification with the resurrection of Christ. This is not the place to inquire what the Resurrection was in itself—a fact or only a fancy—I believe it was the latter; but whichever it was in itself, the belief in it was plainly the materializing utterance of the disciple's deep conviction of Christ's righteousness, the certainty that His was such a soul as God would not leave to languish in the netherworld, and His a holiness which God would not suffer to see corruption. Christ, we read (Rom. iv. 25), was delivered for our offences, *i.e.* for just such offences as men had committed against the Mosaic law, but raised again for our justifica-

tion. "He was born of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. i. 3)—a claim which, while it is advanced as entitling Him to consideration by the Jews, is as nothing in Paul's mind to the fact that He was "declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead in power according to the spirit of holiness," or, as we should say, in conformity with His holy nature. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is Christ that died, nay rather, that is risen again" (Rom. viii. 34). That Christ died is not all—He rose again; He proved that His death was unmerited; He put the law to shame. Christ in His life and death and resurrection is spoken of (Rom. iii. 25) as a manifestation of God's righteousness, as opposed to Mosaic legality, or, as we should say, of human, as opposed to conventional morality. Let us for one moment pause to observe the difference between the Pauline and the modern view of the Atonement. The popular theology of the day derived from Anselm says Christ died under God's curse as the sinner's substitute, and by faith His merits are transferred to the believer. Of all such transference and substi-

tution Paul says not a word. Nay, his view is absolutely incompatible with such a notion. According to him, Christ died under the curse, not of God, but of a law enacted by certain spiritual powers—angels, demons, or what not—of whose dominion Christ was sent to make an end, and died in such a manner, with such a sense of immortality and peace with God, that we need no longer fear the curse of the law. A law which could condemn the righteous has no terrors for us, who live not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit, who walk not in carnal ordinances but by the light of conscience. Again, Christ did not die, according to Paul, instead of, *ἀντὶ*, but for, *ὑπὲρ*, mankind. This point was long ago emphasized by Prof. Jowett. He died, not to save us from dying, but that we might be content to die with Him, that we might rise with Him again. Into His death we are buried by baptism. Self-identification with Christ, fellowship with His sufferings, not belief in Him as an expiatory sacrifice, is everywhere with Paul the faith that justifies.

It is not my business here to declare for either system; but I may just remark that the one is wholly fanciful, at variance with facts,

and loaded with contradictions, while the other is nothing else than a highly idealized view of the facts themselves. How should the physical death of another redeem us from spiritual death? The supposed effect is out of all proportion to the cause. Besides, the guilt of conscience admits of no transference, and that is the real punishment of sin. Christ could only have been substituted for us by becoming as wicked as the worst of men; and if eternal death is, as is pretended, the penalty of sin, then Christ's death should have been not only a spiritual but equally an eternal one. On the other hand, Paul tells us nothing else but what, if we allow for the peculiar colouring of age and manner, every Christian conscience may verify for itself. But we have not yet considered the Pauline view in all its bearings. From what we have been saying, it would appear that the redemptive work of Christ consisted, in the first instance, in delivering men from all sense of allegiance to the Mosaic or any other ceremonial law, and that on the ground of its proved injustice in condemning Christ—this was its negative side; secondly, in supplying us with a higher and diviner stand-

ard of morality, as exhibited in Christ's teaching and example, God's righteousness in the place of the righteousness, so-called, of the law. But is this all? Was not the death of Christ in some way or other instrumental, according to Paul, in procuring the forgiveness of sins? Undoubtedly. But here we are met by a difficulty. Offences, *παραπτώματα*, are of two kinds: they may be offences against a conventional standard of morality, and offences against the moral law of conscience and of God. The former need not be sins at all; they may, as in the case of Christ, be deeds of the highest virtue. Now the breaker of the Mosaic law, as such, is justified in Christ, because Christ was the boldest infringer of the law of Moses, and died as such. But suppose, as we must, that in breaking the law of Moses we have also offended against morality—as, for example, if we steal, or murder, or bear false witness—how does Christ's example help us then, or how does His death redeem us? The answer of Paul would seem to be by revealing the character and attributes of God, which could not be seen so long as the law was in force. “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto

Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." The curse of the law was rescinded, and men had time to breathe. What was this curse of the law ? It sounded on this wise, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all the things that are written in the book of the law to do them." Now although it be true that it contains certain just as well as many unjust prohibitions and demands, yet it is plain to a follower of Paul that the sternness of this denunciation is as unjust as it is indiscriminate. It draws no distinctions of degree or kind. It leaves no room for repentance. It makes no inquiry into motives. It holds out no hope of reformation. While it leaves many a real sin untouched, it ruthlessly condemns the technical offender. It attacks persons rather than principles, and the quality of its mercy is as strained as the character of its justice is questionable. Now as he who offendeth in one point is guilty of all, so Christ, when He attacked the law in detail, equally defied its principles. While He enforced its just demands, He utterly refused to endorse its curses. Sinless Himself, in Paul's belief, He was the sinner's friend ; His Father was the

sinner's Father too. Thus the curse of the law fell powerless, not only on the innocent, but on the guilty. Men felt that the law was no longer their master, but the God who blessed and cursed not, who called the sinner to Himself, not spurned him from His presence ; punishing men only for their good, to lead them to repentance and peace, not dooming them to hopeless perdition. Thus, in the death of Christ, Paul saw the proclamation of a general amnesty for all *past* offences *πάρεστιν προγεγούτων ἀμαρτημάτων*, as though the inaugurator of a new *régime* should release all prisoners, whether justly or unjustly confined, and say, Let bygones be bygones ; we will begin anew. Bearing these considerations in mind, we shall see no hint at any expiatory sacrifice in such expressions as a propitiation, *ἱλαστήριον*, by faith in His blood, "justified freely by His blood."—the ransom, *ἀπολύτρωσις*, which is in Jesus Christ. The word *ἱλαστήριον* (Rom. iii. 25) is the only expression, as far as I know, in Paul's writings naturally implying a sacrificial idea, and from its isolated occurrence we are justified in assuming it to be purely figurative.

There is, however, a certain mystic element in the Pauline view of the Atonement, which it behoves us to take into consideration along with the historical. Christ is said to have died unto sin (Rom. vi. 10), and this death unto sin must be shared by His followers. But how could Christ die unto sin? We can understand a wicked man doing so when he puts off the body. But how could He who, in the belief of Christians, knew no sin, die to it? We soon find, however, that this dying to sin is the same thing as dying to the law: *ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ*. The meaning is apparently that the law of sin and death had a kind of claim upon the body of Christ, which claim was satisfied by His crucifixion. Christ was "the son of David according to the flesh," and as such subject to the Jewish law by the mere fact of His Jewish birth. He was not only "born of a woman," but "born under the law." The realm of the law is the flesh. Therefore it is that there is no condemnation to them that walk, not after the flesh in carnal ordinances, but after the spirit of a righteous life. The law has no power over the spirit, though it may slay the flesh, as it slew the body

of Christ. This enables us to understand the view of Origen, according to which the Devil was tricked in the crucifixion into surrendering his claim on humanity in exchange for the body of Christ, expecting that being allowed to have His body, he should obtain His soul also ; but he discovered to his eternal discomfiture, that while able to kill the body of Jesus, he was powerless against His soul, and in the end had to resign both His body and His soul at the Resurrection. *Mutatis mutandis*, the Devil answers in a manner to Paul's angels or genii, whose law, the law of Moses, had claims upon the flesh alone. It was the carnal character of the law that made it impotent for good. "It is weak through the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3). "With the flesh I serve the law of sin" (Rom. vii. 25). Here and elsewhere the fleshly character of the law is dwelt upon. The observer of the law who persecutes the spiritual worshipper is called (Gal. iv. 29), *ο κατά σάρκα γεννηθείς*. The advocates of circumcision are those who would make a fair show in the flesh. It was doubtless the predominance of external ordinances in the Mosaic precepts which gave them in the Apostle's eyes this carnal charac-

ter. It was therefore in the flesh that Christ was subject to this law of sin. When He put off the flesh, He put off the last vestige of His subjection. In the flesh He had been the minister or servant of circumcision, but only to confirm the promises given to the fathers before the institution of that rite, by His subsequent rebellion against the law (Rom. xv. 8), somewhat as Broad Churchmen submit to certain ordinances as a vantage-ground for preaching against their supposed necessity. We now see the force of Paul's refusal to know any one, even Christ Himself, according to the flesh, *i.e.* in His subjection to the Jewish law. Let me now briefly sum up my view of the Pauline theory of the Atonement, and then further illustrate it by a few well-known texts. Paul regarded Christ as the accursed of the law, yet at the same time as righteous in the sight of God; hence His death under the sentence of the law was the law's own condemnation, inasmuch as it pronounced the innocent guilty. The curse of the law being put to a crucial test by the death of Christ, and nullified by His resurrection, henceforth loses its terrors for mankind at large. God is re-

vealed in His true character of the Father of Jesus Christ, like Him full of goodness and forgiveness to the sinful, as well as a free excuplator from merely technical offences, and thus by the manifestation of Himself in Christ reconciles the world unto Himself. Faith in Christ means self-identification with Christ, in the same way as we talk familiarly of believing in a man with whom we are heartily at one : a willingness to be crucified to the flesh, *i.e.* both to the lusts of the flesh on the one hand, and the demands of the carnal law on the other, and this that we may live the resurrection life of Christ, the life of the Spirit. It was thus that Christ crucified—to the Jews a stumbling-block, expecting as they did a second Moses; to the Greeks mere foolishness as an idle squanderer of His life—was to the called, to those who were touched by a sense of affinity, the power of God and the wisdom of God. It was thus that the *ἐξουθενημένα* of popular opinion, the things that were not, were chosen of God to confound the things that were, the recognised institutions of Judaism. It was thus that the boast of all flesh was to be silenced. It was thus that Jesus Christ became to men “wisdom from

God, justification, sanctification, and redemption." This is the meaning of "knowing nothing but Jesus as Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor. ii. 2); of being "washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. vi. 11). This was the *κοινωνία τοῦ αἵματος καὶ τοῦ σωμάτος τοῦ Χριστοῦ* represented by the cup of blessing and the broken bread (1 Cor. x. 16). Such were the solemn issues that hung upon the fact of Christ's immortality, or, as the Apostle phrased it, "the resurrection from the dead." "If Christ is not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (1 Cor. xv. 17). The curse of the law still holds good. Jesus was a malefactor after all. Such, on the other hand, was the joyful certainty of Christian faith, that the believer was assured that though crucified through weakness, *i.e.* the weakness of that flesh on which the law had a claim, yet He lives through the power of God (2 Cor. xiii. 4). In this way by the law Paul died to the law (Gal. ii. 19); in other words, the law was dead to him; it was its own destruction. "I am crucified with Christ," I accept the sentence passed on Him, I challenge the judgment which

condemned Him, "yet I live no longer as myself, but as Christ living in me" (*v. 20*). "Far be it from me to boast save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world," with its shallow judgments and mock condemnation, is as much "crucified to me" as "I am to the world." "Henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear about in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus"—the marks of shame in Jewish zealots' eyes, yet of immortal honour in the eyes of God (*Gal. vi. 14-17*). "In the Beloved, God's kindness has been showed us, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our offences, because God has made known in Him the mystery of His will," the true secret of the way to please Him, not by a catalogue of deeds, but by a life of love (*Eph. i. 6-9*). By the death of Christ, moreover, His Judaism died, the enmity in His flesh (circumcision), the law of commandments in the form of ordinances was done away ; Christ was henceforth but a man among men (so far, I mean, as race or creed were concerned), and Jew and Gentile might be one in Him, reconciled not only as men to God, but as brethren to one another. The sacrifice of Christ is in no sense

vicarious according to Paul. It is at most representative ; it is shared, not shirked, by all who believe in Him, who are also exhorted to present their bodies a living holy sacrifice, well-pleasing to God, their reasonable service. Christ's self-surrender on our behalf is strictly analogous to our self-sacrifice for one another (Eph. v. 2). Moreover, the Apostle does not disclaim a righteousness of his own, as our translation of Phil. iii. 9 would lead the reader to infer, but rather claims *as his own* a righteousness which comes by the faith of Christ  $\muὴ\ \epsilon̄χων\ \epsilon̄μὴν\ \deltaικαιοσύνην\ \tauὴν\ \epsilon̄κ\ νόμου$ , ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἐκ Θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει. "Not having for mine the righteousness which is from the law, but that which comes from the faith of Christ, the righteousness from God which waits on faith," and that is to be realized, not by any external transference, but by an internal appropriation of the righteousness of Christ, "by knowing Him and the power of His resurrection," *i.e.* the power that raised Him, "and the fellowship of His sufferings, by conformity to His death." This is the true deliverance, according to Paul, from "the power of darkness" ; this is the true "redemption by

His blood," and remission of sins (Col. i. 13-15). This is the peace by the blood of His cross (v. 20); this is the reconciliation spoken of in the body of His flesh by death; this is the service of "the living and true God" as distinguished from the authors of the law; and this is salvation from the wrath to come (1 Thess. i. 9, 10). A salvation, not from the wrath of God, for God has not appointed us to wrath (v. 9), but rather from the wrath of the law, the condemnation of a conscience in bondage to a hard, unkindly code, which can neither command the allegiance of the heart, nor secure the obedience of the will. This vague, indefinable dread, this dead weight of actual guilt, blent with ignorant apprehension, gathering in fearful gloom about the onward pathway of the benighted soul, Paul calls expressively "the wrath to come," and perhaps he attributed it to those grim ministers of death whom he has elsewhere spoken of as the authors of the law, the genii of the world, the powers of the air.

## CHAPTER III.

### *ANTI-PAULINE AND SEMI-PAULINE VIEWS.*

THE Epistle of James and the Apocalypse are the only anti-Pauline documents which have found their way into the canon of Scripture. The one ignores the Atonement altogether, never mentioning the death of Christ, but contenting himself with combating the doctrine of the vain man, whom he discreetly avoids naming, who teaches justification by faith without works. With the Apocalyptic, Jesus is simply the typical martyr, the true and faithful witness ; His blood is a martyr's blood. So little is His death a deliverance from the law of Moses, that the song of Moses and the Lamb are supposed to constitute the height of heavenly harmony. In this book it appears that in reward for the obedience of Jesus to the law of God, and for His patient sufferings,—in other words, as the crown of His martyrdom,—God gave Him power over the bodies and

souls of men, to save those who obeyed and destroy those who resisted Him. The accuser of mankind is violently dispossessed of his office, without any satisfactory reasons being assigned. The conceptions of the writer are gross and material. There is seldom any moral elevation in his tone. His idea of salvation is the privilege of ruling "like kings and priests on the earth." There is no reference to the Atonement as a rescue from spiritual bondage; there is no sense of the glorious "liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." The only point of agreement between Paul and the writer in question is the bare formal statement that Christ "has purchased us with His blood," and redeemed us from "every kindred and nation, and tribe and language"; but what is meant by said purchase and redemption is nowhere explained. It seems to be a mere phrase borrowed from the Pauline school, whose language the writer almost insensibly adopts in his attempt to supplant his rival, but which has no organic connexion with the system he espouses—a system itself so crude as to lack all power of development.

The other Epistles exhibit a milder form of

Paulinism (Hebrews), or a desire to effect a compromise, in the interests of catholic unity, between the pillars of the Jewish Church and Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles.

In Hebrews, as with Paul, the law was the word "spoken by angels," ὁ δι' ἀγγέλων νλαληθεὶς λόγος (Heb. ii. 2). But these angels appear in a more favourable light than in Paul's writings, inasmuch as the law which they promulgate is no longer the mere opposite of the gospel, but rather a foreshadowing of the latter. Nevertheless, the substance having come, the shadow vanishes ; the angels' rule is at end henceforth, "for it is not to angels that He hath subjected the world to come" : Οὐ γὰρ ἀγγέλοις ὑπέταξε τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μὲλλονταν (Heb. ii. 5). The death of Christ however is no longer, as with Paul, a victory over the angels administering the law, but simply over the devil, to whom is attributed, not indeed its promulgation, but its bad effect ; *viz.* the fear of death which it engendered. Christ by His fearless death and triumphant resurrection delivered men from the fear of death, that by His "death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ; and deliver all those who through

fear of death were all their life long subject to bondage" (ii. 15). This is one aspect of the atonement, according to the Epistle to the Hebrews. But inasmuch as Christ is the true High Priest, who is to supersede all other priestly persons and functions, we obtain a fresh point of view, according to which His death appears in the light of a sacrifice to God. This conception of Christ as a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek involves a great complexity of ideas. First, inasmuch as Christ is a High Priest, He is regarded, *quid* High Priest, as bearing in His own person the sins of the world: *ἀπαξ προσενεχθεὶς εἰς τὸ πολλῶν ἀνενεγκεῖν ἀμαρτίας* (ix. 28). Here if, on the one hand, we are brought very near to the doctrine of a vicarious sacrifice, yet, on the other, we are brought nearer still to the more spiritual doctrine, according to which the true sacrifice consists in self-surrender, and the atonement in the realization of that self-surrender in Christ. And there can be no doubt but that this exalted conception of the death of Christ forms the real groundwork of the writer's theory; but his symbolic language, and the conciliatory attitude he assumed towards the Jewish ritual,

as something good enough in its way for the time, although destined to pass away as a *σκιὰ τῶν μελλόντων*, a foreshadowing of better things to come, has given some colour of plausibility to the attempts of modern theologians to discover in it the doctrine of an expiatory sacrifice. That the more spiritual aspect forms the central point of view in this epistle is however abundantly plain. The consistent defenders of the expiatory theory would have to maintain that Christ's death was a sacrifice in the same sense as the Jewish sacrifices are by them supposed to have been; namely, an offering to assuage the wrath of God. But, in the first place, the Jewish sacrifices were not properly speaking expiatory: even the sin offerings were rather an acknowledgment of unworthiness than a means of pacification; so far from God's favour being sought by them, it was presupposed before they could be offered. But even had they been intended, as modern theology maintains, for expiatory offerings, which only failed of their end because forsooth the blood was not precious or the priests not pure enough, yet there remains the still further difficulty that, according to this epistle the

sacrifice of Christ was of an entirely different character : “ Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt offering, and offering for sin Thou wouldest not, neither hadst Thou pleasure therein ; then I said, Behold, I come to do Thy will, O God. . . . He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second ” (Heb. x. 8, 9). This fulfilment of the requirements of the law was not a success, nor a mere improvement on Mosaic sacrifice which Christ introduced, but the opening up of a new and living way : *ἐνεκαίνισεν ἡμῖν ὁδὸν πρόσφατον καὶ ζῶσαν*. In Jesus a new covenant was visibly established by God, who inscribed His commandments on men’s hearts. The fault of the old covenant was that its ceremonial failed to make the worshipper perfect in conscience : *μὴ δυνάμεναι κατὰ συνείδησιν τελειώσαι τὸν λατρεύοντα*. The claims of the law were carnal and external, claims of the flesh, *δικαιώματα σαρκὸς* : they had no hold upon the inner man. To this mere purity of the flesh, *καθαρότης σαρκός*, which was nothing more than an outward propriety, is opposed the state of those who are sprinkled in heart from an evil conscience : *ἐρραντισμένοι τὰς καρδίας ἀπὸ συνειδήσεως πονηρᾶς*. The atonement then, according to this epistle,

is a spiritual change in ourselves, wrought as it were by anticipation and potentially by Jesus as our High Priest or representative. There is not a word in Hebrews as to any change either in the mind of God or in His forensic relations towards mankind. The *ἀπολύτρωσις* or *ἀφεσίς ἀμαρτιῶν* accomplished by the death of Christ, or rather by His whole life from first to last, is the effect of the new spiritual life of which He is the author. Jesus in fact is, by His example, the inaugurator of a new era in the spiritual experience of all those who believe on Him and with Him. And even this Christian faith is defined (ch. xi.) in very general terms : " Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen : . . . for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. . . . Therefore, seeing we are compassed about by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is

set down at the right hand of the throne of God." For the rest, we hear nothing as yet of a vicarious sacrifice, as that term has been understood in modern times. Jesus indeed, as High Priest, leads the way, but we, as equally priests with Him, must follow. Christ is indeed the intercessor\* with God for men, ever living to appear on their behalf, but only, it would seem, as representative of that which we all must become. We too are exhorted to pass like Him within the veil as well as without the camp. This is the new and living way opened up to us by His blood, which speaketh better things than that of Abel. Jesus is the surety of a better covenant, *κρείτ-τονος διαθήκης ἔγγυος*; which can only mean that His death, regarded as the grandest euthanasia the world had ever seen, conveyed the most abundant assurance that it was possible for men to live and die at peace with God, without the intervention of the Jewish priesthood, yes, even beneath its bitterest denunciations.

\* Observe that the word *ἔγγυος* contains no implication of imploring the mercy of God; the notion is apparently that Christ is in the presence of God on our behalf as an earnest of what we are to be.

Of a more or less Pauline tendency are the epistles to Timothy, but their Paulinism is divested of its polemical edge and watered down into generalities. That they belong to a later generation than that of the Apostle is sufficiently evident, both from the unmistakable references they contain to Gnostic systems, and the indications they afford of a fairly developed Church organization. In these epistles Jesus Christ is the Saviour of a sinful world. It "is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners"; but wherein that salvation consists, and in what manner it was accomplished by Jesus, is nowhere explicitly stated. In the first chapter of the second epistle we have the phrase, "having destroyed death and shed light on life and immortality by the Gospel"; so that the redemption seems here to consist in a mere confutation of the Sadducees. This is quite in accordance with 1 Timothy iv. 10: "For this cause we both labour and suffer reproach, because we believe in the living God who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe." We shall soon find much the same view in Acts. The object of the

writer seems to be to present the Apostle's doctrine in so vague a form as not to offend the susceptibilities of Jews and Judaizing Christians. His thoroughly un-Pauline attitude toward the letter of Scripture, and consequently his fundamental difference of view with respect to the work of Christ, is abundantly apparent from 2 Timothy iii. 15, ff. : "From a child thou hast known the sacred letters ( $\tauὰ \; ἑπά$  γράμματα), which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired of God, and is profitable for instruction, for conviction, for correction, for education in righteousness." This ill accords with Paul, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." How can we imagine Paul, who doubtless appealed to the Scriptures when it suited his purpose, committing himself to the assertion that all Scripture, including of course the whole Mosaic law, is inspired of God ? What then becomes of the angels and genii ? The hand of the catholic Church, that great peacemaker at the expense of principle, is here too clearly discernible to be ignored. A still further disagreement with the original Pauline view is apparent from the manner in

which the writer treats the Gnostic opponents of Judaism ; he calls them (1 Tim. i. 7) *νομοδιδάσκαλοι*, men who pretended to teach the law, *i.e.* to know better than Moses. So far from countenancing such attacks, he takes the law under his protection : “ We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully : knowing this, that for a righteous man no law exists, but for the lawless and disobedient, the impious and sinful.” How is this to be reconciled with Paul’s view of the law, as an essentially maleficent principle, bringing all men equally under one sweeping condemnation, Christ among the number ? According to Paul Christ was the *end* or *destruction* of the law to every one that believeth ; according to the author of these epistles the *end* of the commandment : *i.e.* that which the commandment really meant is “ love out of a pure heart and conscience and out of faith unfeigned.” This is just in the spirit of the growing catholic Church, the embodiment of the common sense of Christendom, which sought to get over the opposition between the law and the gospel by the assumption that the gospel is nothing but the law rightly understood. The author of Hebrews supplies the

intermediate stage by his theory that the law is a symbolic foreshadowing of the gospel. The consequences of Judaism are thus avoided for a time; but the principle of Judaism, the Divine legation of Moses, is retained, to the despiritualization of Christianity, as her subsequent history has shown.

The Epistle to Titus, which, as far as its reflexions on Gnosticism and Church polity go, sounds like an echo of those to Timothy, has one passage which, as far as mere words are concerned, is strikingly Pauline. This is chapter iii. 4, 5 : "When the goodness and kindness of our Saviour God was manifested, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His own mercy He saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He poured forth on us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we might be heirs by hope of everlasting life."

But the apparent similarity should not blind us to an essential disparity, which comes out even in the words themselves. The contrast here drawn is no longer between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of Christ,

but simply between works of righteousness *which we have done*, or rather left undone, and the goodness and grace of God, which descend to justify us freely. The works of righteousness stand instead "of the works of the law," implying that the works of the law, if fulfilled according to the intention of the Law-giver, would have been indeed the works of righteousness,—which Paul would scarcely have allowed. In the writings of Paul Christ appears as the leader of a great rebellion against the righteousness of the law; in the Epistle to Titus as the messenger of peace to those who had broken that law. With Paul Christ saves us in a sense by disobeying the law; here only *in spite* of our failure to obey it. The notion of a vicarious sacrifice is however still farther from the mind of the writer of these epistles than from that of Paul. The death of Christ and the forgiving spirit which He manifested to those who slew Him were a declaration by Him who called Himself the Son of God of His Father's readiness to forgive, of His "kindness and goodness to men." As to God having been moved to mercy by the sacrifice of Christ, there is no hint at such a notion.

The First Epistle of Peter was evidently written (though of course not by the Apostle himself) with the object of coming as near to Paul as possible, so far as phraseology went, without committing its writer distinctly to the Pauline antagonism to Judaic views. "Ye were redeemed," says the writer (i. 18), "from your vain traditional manner of life" (*ἐλυτρώθητε ἐκ τῆς ματαίας ὑμῶν ἀναστροφῆς πατροπαραδότου*, a perfect string of Pauline idioms), but studiously avoids identifying this "traditional manner of life" with Mosaic observance. He exhorts men, like Paul in Romans, to offer up spiritual sacrifices (*πνευματικὰς θυσίας*), but is careful to say nothing invidious with regard to any others. He is more tender to the Jewish conscience than even the writer to the Hebrews, who says, "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle."

"Christ suffered for us," he writes (ii. 21); "He bare our sins Himself in His own body on the tree" (another string of Pauline idioms); but he steadily declines to say that "He was made sin for us." "Once for sins He suffered, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God," he writes again (iii. 18); but he alto-

gether ignores the Pauline doctrine that Christ died under the curse of the law. Well may the epistle be headed *καθολική*; it is catholic in more senses than one. It is catholic, as dealing in vague generalities, in preference to the sharply pointed definitions of Paul; it is catholic, because it would make St. Peter speak so like St. Paul, that they may both agree in founding the catholic Church at Rome, and exchange the kiss of peace to fight with other foes. No doubt the superiority of the Pauline over the old Petrine doctrine is here tacitly acknowledged; but that which is stamped with the authority of Peter is but a form of Paulinism, which lacks the power thereof. As for the Second Epistle of Peter, like the Epistle of Jude (of which it may be called almost a version) it is completely silent on the subject of the atonement; while its whole style is so different from that of the first epistle that we can only suppose the catholic traditions which ascribed it to the same author to have had no better reason for its assignation than that very wonderful tribute which the writer pays alike to the wisdom and obscurity of his beloved brother Paul, in

whose writings, he significantly remarks, "are some things which are hard to be understood, and which ignorant and unstable men wrest to their own destruction"; not that the writings themselves are responsible for this result, for, he adds, the other Scriptures fare no better at their hands (2 Pet. iii. 16). This somewhat equivocal compliment, containing as it does the very unequivocal recognition of the canonicity of the epistles of Paul, was probably the best ground which the early Church could have adduced for believing in the authenticity of this epistle, while it affords the modern critic the most irrefragable proof that it neither proceeded from the hand nor belonged to the age of Peter.

We will now turn to the Gospel of John, as forming the Scriptural climax of speculation concerning the person and work of Christ, from which we will endeavour to descend by way of the Acts and synoptics to that historical basis to which, as we believe, all theories of the atonement may and must be finally referred. In the fourth Gospel, while Jesus is deified, on the one hand, as the pre-existent all-creative  $\Lambda\circ\gamma\sigma$ , He is idealized, on

the side of His human manifestation, as the true paschal Lamb, who by His death abolished as superfluous all sacrifice beside. This is no doubt the reason why Jesus, "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world," is made, according to this evangelist, to die on the night when the passover was slain, instead of eating that passover with His disciples, as He does in the synoptic accounts. Hence the elaborate typology, according to which even the minutest particulars in Messianic fore-shadowings were fulfilled in the death of Jesus. This is the force of the memorable *τετέλεσται* : "all things were accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled." The Law, according to this view, which is closely akin to that of Hebrews, is in itself a kind of prophecy, which, in the nature of things, is at an end as soon as it is accomplished. One difference between the two writers however is the nearer agreement of the former with Paul in representing the death of Jesus as caused by the Law; yet again we must probably here distinguish between the Law in its true meaning, as fulfilled in Jesus, and the Law as misinterpreted by its authorized expounders. It is they, be it

observed, not the evangelist in his own person, who represent Jesus as an offender against the Jewish law. "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God" (xix. 7)—probably referring to the commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Here it is no real breach of the commandment with which Jesus is credited, but only an offence against the conventional interpretation with which the Jews had clogged it. It is remarkable moreover, that whereas Paul regards, and makes a point of regarding, the crucifixion as for the nonce a Jewish punishment, identifying, as above remarked, the Roman *crux* (Gk. *σταυρός*) with the Jewish *τέλος* (Gk. *ξύλον*), a tree, the author of the fourth Gospel, on the contrary, is most particularly anxious to point out that the Jews disclaimed all legal power of putting any one to death, in order that Jesus might die by a Roman, not by a Jewish sentence. But while there is no longer here the same irreconcilable contrast between Gospel and Law which appears in Paul's writings, yet, as Baur has well remarked, the law is looked on as something which has had its day, which is long

past and gone, which belonged altogether to the Jews, and to the Jews alone; Christ is made to say, "It is written in *your* law," as though He had nothing to do with it.

And although the writer abstains from representing the Law as essentially evil in intention, and its "righteousness" as the cause of the death of Jesus, yet on that very account the actual effect of the law, as expounded by Scribes and Pharisees and understood by the Jewish people, appears in the darkest light. The Jews and the Law, as administered by their chiefs, bring Jesus to the cross as plainly in the fourth Gospel as in the writings of Paul; but with Paul it is rather the fault of the Law, with the fourth Gospel it is the fault of the Jews. In either case the Law came to an end in Christ. Whatever it might have been once, it showed itself capable only of evil henceforward; its use having come to an end, its abuse at once began. Christ is to the evangelist, as to Paul, the "end of the law to every one that believeth." This then is one aspect of the atonement which he shares with the Apostle to the Gentiles. But we have hitherto dwelt chiefly on the negative side of the Johannine

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doctrine ; its positive side presents us with features worthy of remark. Christ was the true paschal Lamb. This is a formal statement of the evangelist's view ; but let us now inquire what was its material content. Why and how was Christ the true paschal Lamb ? The paschal Lamb was a sacrifice, and, more than that, in its origin (as believed by the Jews) it was more nearly vicarious in its nature than any other. Christ's death then was in some sort a vicarious offering ; but in what sense ? Not as assuaging the wrath of God ; on the contrary, in a sense quite incompatible with the idea of expiation. "Greater love hath no man than this, that one lay down his life for his friends" : it was in this sense that His death was vicarious. But who then are His friends ? The whole world, one might reply. True, in one way, but not in this connexion : "Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." These friends already enjoy the favour of God. In dying therefore for them, Christ did not die to secure God's favour ; His death was in no sense expiatory. He died for His friends as a patriot dies for his country. He placed Himself in

the forefront of the battle ; He was riper for death than His followers, and so was the first to die. In this sense His death was vicarious, but in no other. Jesus did not, according to the evangelist, die a death essentially different from that of any martyr ; on the contrary, He prays that His disciples may devote themselves as He was self-devoted : ἀγιάζω ἐμαντόν, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἡγιασμένοι ὀστιν ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ. Again : “ He that loveth his own life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man will be My servant, let him follow Me ; and where I am, there shall My servant be also.” Just as we read in Hebrews, Christ was High Priest for us only that we too might be priests,—*primus inter pares*, the first born among many brethren. Paul has in one passage (1 Cor. v. 7, 8) anticipated the evangelist in his view of Christ as the true paschal Lamb, though with him, as Baur remarks, the idea seems only momentarily suggested by the fact that when he wrote the Jewish passover was near at hand. So much for the formal definition of Christ as the paschal Lamb. But what of the material content ? What was there in the death of Christ

which approved itself to the enlightened conscience as a sacrifice more noble than the blood of lambs ? Let us answer the question in the words which the evangelist has immortalized as spoken by Christ to Pilate : " For this cause was I born, and for this end came I into the world, that I should bear witness (be a martyr) to the truth." It was the moral grandeur of the character of Jesus as the living, dying witness to the truth, the majestic sublimity of His utter self-surrender to the cause of humanity and of God, which constituted Him the Lamb without spot and blemish, the " Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world," which made His sacrifice the true passover for all mankind. But how was it to atone ? Not by reconciling the Father to His sinful children ; for we read, " God so loved the world, that He sent His only begotten Son into the world." No doubt modern theology has found the love of God for the world compatible with vengeful purposes towards mankind by setting up within the being of God Himself an eternal contradiction between righteousness and mercy ; but all this was foreign to the mind of the evangelist. He knew nothing of

an expiatory sacrifice, and nothing consequently of the difficulties it involves. His theory of the atonement was simpler far. Let us follow him as he develops the sublime idea in the twelfth chapter of his Gospel, *v. 24*, ff: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Here it is the fructifying power of martyrdom to multiply disciples which is dwelt on, in view of the coming crucifixion. In *v. 31* we read, "Now is the judgment of this world (the world of Jewish legality and pharisaic hypocrisy) : now shall the ruler of this world (the presiding genius of Judaism) be cast out: *for (καὶ)* I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Myself." I here translate *καὶ* = *γάρ* in accordance both with modern Greek and Johannine usage. A good example is chapter xvii. 10, "They are Thine, for (*καὶ*) all Mine are Thine and Thine are Mine." So too here the connexion of thought is best seen if we translate *καὶ* in conformity with the vulgar modern idiom as equivalent to *γάρ*: "Now is the ruler of this world cast out; for the attractive power of My death shall wean men from his service."

The epistles attributed to the Apostle John bear traces of the same or a kindred hand to that which produced the Gospel. When therefore we read, *Tὸ αἷμα Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ νιοῦ αὐτοῦ καθαρίζει ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀμαρτίας*, “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin,” or when Jesus Christ is called *ἱλασμὸς περὶ τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν*, we are but reminded again of the figure of the paschal lamb. How far this *ἱλασμὸς* was from being regarded as a means to assuage the wrath or obtain the favour of God may be seen from the following well known but too little considered passage: “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation in the matter of our sins” (*ἱλασμὸν περὶ τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν*, not *διὰ τὰς ἀμαρτίας* —*1 John iv. 10*). The same phrase occurs chapter ii. 2.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *THE HISTORICAL BASIS.*

WE will now direct our attention for a brief space to the Acts of the Apostles, a book which we regard as standing midway between the subjective, or theoretical, and the objective, or historical, writings of the New Testament; for while they contain but little genuine history, yet their form and intention is historical. In the opening chapters of the Acts great stress is laid on the resurrection; and while the fact is stated as a matter of history, to be believed on testimony (ii. 32), *οὗ πάντες ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν μάρτυρες* ("of which all we are witnesses"), yet the moral import is not forgotten: "Thou wilt not leave My soul in the nether world, nor suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption."

Inasmuch then as the Crucified is made both Lord and Christ (ii. 36), the preacher exhorts to repentance, to be ratified by baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the

remission of sins. It is this remission of sins which forms, as we shall see, the central point and the historical basis of the doctrine of the atonement. The close connexion between the name of Jesus Christ and the remission of sins, as well as the healing of the sick, which was regarded as a physical demonstration of the power to forgive, is full of significance for our inquiry. The forgiveness of sins by virtue of the delegated authority of Christ is about the most definite view of the atonement which meets us in the *Acts*, although side by side with this notion runs another affecting the Jews especially. The great sin for which, as we read, they were pricked to the heart was the crucifixion of Jesus; their acknowledgment of His messiahship by baptism in His name was therefore the natural condition of that sin's remission.

As the main object of *Acts* appears to be that of obliterating every kind of contrast between Peter and Paul, making Peter speak and act like Paul, and Paul tergiversate like Peter, we need not be surprised that the Pauline theory of the atonement is as far as possible obscured. Christ is represented (iii. 22) as a

prophet like unto Moses, whereas Paul's whole life since his conversion was a protest against any compact between the two. The death of Christ is attributed to certain parties among the Jews, and not to the Jewish law. Even the Pharisees are spared; the bitterest opposition to the Gospel is always charged upon the Sadducees (v. 17), who are led on by a Sadducean high priest. The Sadducean high priest is doubtless historical;\* but the Sadducees, even when in power, were never popular, and it was only by a coalition with the Pharisees that either the death of Jesus or the persecution of the Church could be effectually compassed. Saul himself, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, is witness that the life of the reactionary movement lay in that quarter. This is a fact which the book of the Acts does its best to hide; hence Gamaliel the Pharisee is introduced counselling moderation. The idea that Stephen taught that the Gospel of Jesus was to prove subversive of Jewish customs is represented as a false calumny proceeding from the spite of Hellenistic

\* Even this statement requires qualification. See Keim's "Jesus von Nazara," p. 618.

Libertines, Cyrenians, Alexandrians, Cilicians, and Asians, the last people one would have supposed to fall foul of the Hellenist Stephen. The Pharisees, of all people, take sides with Paul! The covenant made with Abraham is the covenant of circumcision, not, as with Paul, the covenant of promise made with him in uncircumcision (vii. 8). Moses is called "redeemer and leader" (vii. 35), instead of mediator between the genii and mankind, from whom Christ came to redeem. The culminating crime of the Jews is their neglect to keep the law, not their blind adherence to it: "Who have received the law in the form of angelic ordinances, (as if forsooth that were a recommendation!) and have not kept it" (vii. 53).

Here the Pauline phrase *διαταγέis δι' ἀγγέλων* (Gal. iii. 19) is adopted for the very purpose of obscuring the Pauline doctrine. St. Paul employed it for the degradation of the law; here it is employed for its exaltation. When Paul is allowed to speak for himself he is made to represent the Gospel as supplemental to, not subversive of, the Law (xiii. 39): "From all those things from which ye could not be justified by

the law of Moses, every one who believeth in Him is justified." That is, where the law of Moses fails, there justification by faith begins.

It were a mistake therefore to interpret such phrases as "the gospel of the grace of God" (xx. 24), "the Church which He acquired by His own blood" (v. 28), in any Pauline sense. The baptism of repentance for the remission of sins is all we have to fall back on. The purpose of the Acts is practical, not theoretical; the writer or compiler seems to have thought less of propounding any view as to the manner in which the death of Jesus secured the salvation of the world than of his main purpose, which was to show what good friends Peter and Paul had always been, and how mightily they preached in concert the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins among Jews and Gentiles alike. *Μετάνοια* and *ἀφεσις ἀμαρτιῶν* are words which constantly recur throughout the book, and we see no reason to doubt but that they formed the simple substance of the earliest gospel message.

It is the original meaning of these words, "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," which we now propose to investigate

as the historical basis on which all theories of the atonement will finally be found to rest. That this *ἀφεσίς ἀμαρτιῶν*, which in Acts is regarded as the gift of the exalted and glorified Jesus, was bestowed in virtue of repentance, and that the faith spoken of here is nothing but the simple belief in the readiness of God to forgive the repentant, joined with belief in Jesus as the appointed Ambassador of amnesty, and not, according to the so called evangelical view, in any propitiatory work of Christ, is involved in the silence of the writer with respect to any such propitiation. That salvation is offered by God to man, not absolutely, but through Christ, may only—nay, in default of more explicit statements, can only—mean that Christ is the guarantor, the authority for this readiness of God to absolve the penitent.

Now the doctrine of repentance for the remission of sins was characteristic of the teaching of Jesus; for this reason among others the Baptist was held to be the forerunner of Christ. I will not here discuss the question whether that was the only reason, and whether the silence of Josephus with respect to any specific messianic announcement on the part

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of John is to be accepted in the teeth of the Gospels as proof that none such was made.

With John however the duty of repentance, with Jesus the promise of forgiveness, had the greater prominence. In Matthew we read only that John said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"; although as the evangelist speaks of his disciples confessing their sins, it may be presumed that he held out some hope of forgiveness in case of reformation. Indeed, Mark and Luke both tell us he preached the "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins"; though here it may be held that the view of the latter evangelists is coloured by the kindlier crosslights of the subsequent teaching of Jesus. At all events, the burden of the Saviour's message and the language of His eloquent deeds was the "remission of sins." Beautifully and touchingly is this idea expressed in the words of the deutero-Isaiah, quoted according to Luke by Jesus as a prelude to His ministry in Galilee, inaugurated in the synagogue of His native town: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; wherefore He hath anointed Me to preach good tidings, to the poor hath He sent Me, to heal those who are

broken in heart, to preach deliverance to the captives and restoration of sight to the blind, to send away the contrite forgiven, to preach a year accepted of the Lord." We can well understand how the eyes of all were fixed upon Him, and they wondered "at the words of grace," *i.e.* the message of free forgiveness, which proceeded out of His lips. How might the flagging energy of our listeners be aroused, how might the sleeping conscience be awakened, the empty church replenished, and the doubting heart be cheered, if our preachers would lay aside their wranglings with the truths of science, their oppositions of philosophy falsely so called, their zeal for fruitless dogmas so little according to knowledge, and preach once more with Jesus to simple and to wise, to stubborn and to heart-broken, to anxious and to careless alike, the all-embracing message of the love of God!

We need scarcely pursue this subject further in order to discover the historical basis for one side of the Pauline doctrine of the atonement: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." But how was it that

Christ was at the same time, even to some extent perhaps unconsciously and in spite of Himself, the opponent and abolisher of the Mosaic law? We answer, because that law was concerned, not with the forgiveness, but with the conviction and condemnation of the sinner; and mercilessly did its exponents in the days of Jesus insist upon its sternest interpretation: *pace* Emmanuel Deutsch. Had there been more Hillels and Gamaliels among the Pharisees, and fewer Shammais, there would have been less need of Jesus; but to quote such men as representatives of the dominant Pharisaism of the day is, I suspect, like quoting the humane and equitable reasonings of Roman Catholic casuists in order to prove that the papal system was not cruel and oppressive.

Could there be a greater contrast than the spirit of the words, "This people that knoweth not the law is cursed," and the gospel call of Jesus, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden"?

According to the accredited expounders of the law of Moses, the strict observers of specific commands were the especial favourites of

Heaven ; according to Christ there is "joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, that need no repentance." Then again, the righteousness at which the scribes and Pharisees were aiming was not, according to Jesus, the righteousness which admitted to the kingdom of heaven (Matt. v. 20, ff.) ; and there can be no mistaking the fact that Jesus, even if he does not directly challenge the authority of Moses, identifies the Mosaic law as summed up in the decalogue with this defective righteousness of Scribes and Pharisees. This again throws light upon the Pauline disclaimer of the righteousness which is of the law in favour of the righteousness which follows the faith of Jesus —the righteousness of a heart by love drawn Godwards. The moral superiority of the repentant sinner, who deplores and forsakes his sin, over the self-righteous doer of external deeds, whose motive is some visible, some outward reward, not self-contained in the pleasure of well doing, is the constantly recurring lesson of many a parable, many a word, and many an act of Jesus.

The whole attitude of Christ towards the

Jewish Scriptures, at least as represented in the Gospels, is a point too little attended to. Sometimes it is an attitude of mere superiority, as where He fearlessly amplifies the decalogue; sometimes it is directly antagonistic, as, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth (*cf.* Exod. xxi. 24; Deut. xix. 21; Lev. xxiv. 20) : but I say unto you that ye resist not evil"; sometimes it is apologetic, as, "Moses wrote this for the hardness of your hearts"; sometimes it is one of accommodation, taking the form of *argumentum ad hominem* or *diabolum*, *e.g.* "Ye search the Scriptures, for in them *ye think* ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me," and "It is written again," addressed more than once to the tempter. Of all the arguments of orthodoxy, the appeal to Jesus as a witness to the infallibility of Scripture is the most unfortunate and suicidal. This by the way. My present object is, not to attack the doctrine of plenary inspiration, but to show how Jesus, as the critic of the Jewish Scriptures, became the accursed of the Jewish law. But this He was in many ways besides. As the friend of publicans and

sinners He incurred the curse of the Law—separation from sinners was the essence of Pharisaism and the logical issue of Mosaism, which lacked the kindly element of that redeeming love which went to seek and save the lost; as the sabbath breaker for the sake of humanity He incurred the curse of the Law; as the acquirer of the penitent adulteress, whose like Moses had commanded to be stoned, He incurred the curse of the Law; above all, when He taught how the Son of man, the poor and lowly, friendless, homeless One, who had not where to lay His head, was even in virtue of that sonship, without a priestly title or professional standing, empowered to pronounce the penitent forgiven, He incurred the direst censure, the extremest penalty of the Law.

Now if anything is certain in history, I take it to be certain that it was this bold defiance of the law of Moses, partly as it was in itself, partly as interpreted by Scribes and Pharisees, that brought Jesus to the cross. True, He might not have been crucified had He not at last called Himself the Messiah, and appeared as such in Jerusalem; yet that was

not His crime *per se*, but calling Himself the Messiah, *being what He was and teaching what He taught*. And how deeply and tenderly does this truth break forth in simplest and most natural utterance from the great Master's lips when, at that last supper, He took the bread and brake it, and spake the inimitable parable which is but too familiar to our ears : “Take, eat ; this is My body which is given for you : this do in remembrance of Me. Likewise (after supper) the cup also, saying, This cup is the covenant in My blood, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins.”\* So that the last word of the Gospel was the same as the first ; it ended even as it began by proclaiming the “remission of sins.” This pathetic language is not the statement of a theory, but of a fact. There is no theory of the atonement in the synoptics ; there is no mention of Christ's mediation, no whisper of His intercession, no hint at a vicarious sacrifice, or the need of one. On the contrary, the

\* The covenant, *διαθήκη*, alone seems to have been the original reading in Matthew and Mark ; *καυνῆς* may have been an addition from Luke's Gospel, where it is doubtless due to Paul's account in Corinthians.

Lord's prayer, which we have Mr. Moody's authority for stating has sent many millions blindfold into hell, is a standing and irrefragable proof of the immediate spiritual relationship in which Jesus meant all His followers to stand to God. People rail freely at pure theism now-a-days, and that too in the name of Christ; but I wonder where they will find a purer theism than that of Jesus of Nazareth.

We will here draw our investigations to a close, with a brief glance at their results. These results are partly negative, partly positive. We have discovered in the New Testament Scriptures no traces of that theory of expiation for which Scriptural authority, whatever that may be worth, is currently claimed and too commonly admitted; we have discovered, on the other hand, a theory of the atonement, irreconcilable indeed with many received opinions, but having for its basis a groundwork of historic facts, which will prove more potent ultimately for the redemption of mankind than any scholastic speculations. The time may have come for us when we can no longer meditate upon the death of Jesus according to the modes of thought familiar to